5: Pipes S-4 (1953) 1955 RLl Turkestan RLl

798 Latin in the late 1920's, and again from Latin to Cyrillic ten years later),
212 the impounding of religious texts, including the Qur'an, and the total cessation of all publication of a religious nature. These antireligious policies would of themselves make an active religious life most difficult.

795 The interviews, however, indicate that equally important in hampering
735 the religious life of Central Asian Islam are forces not directly connected
177 with the Communist antireligious policies, such as the general impoverishment of the population, which compels the inhabitants to devote all their time and energies to attain bare survival, and leaves little freedom for time-consuming actions required by religion; the shortage of animals used in certain Muslim festivals; and the requirements of a highly dynamic society, geared primarily for production and not for the satisfaction of
[793] the needs of its citizens. If, despite such formidable difficulties, Islamic practices have not altogether vanished from Central Asia, the reason must be sought both in the great hold which this religion exercises on its followers (Bartold had once observed that history knows many cases of mass conversion *to* Islam, but not a single instance of a society being converted *from* Islam), and the secondary role of leaders and institutions in that religion; the latter factor permits Muslims, like the Jews, to survive better under extreme oppression than other religions for which the clergy, the hierarchy, the supreme spiritual authority are essential.

788 One of the most important — perhaps the single most important — ele-
177 ment in the Muslim ritual are the five daily prayers. This practice seems to have declined among Soviet Muslims to such an extent as to have all
[687] but vanished. The principal cause for its disappearance is the inability of Soviet Muslims to take time off from work in order to recite the prayers; such stoppage of work is considered "economic sabotage" and involves serious retribution. The fact that since the 1930's Friday — the day of rest and public prayer — is considered a regular working day in Central Asia prevents the adult population from engaging in communal worship as well. The only times of the day when a Muslim may perform his prayers undisturbed occur at sunrise and at sunset — the first and the last of the daily prayers; that is, when he is at home, with his family. This is the reason why, to the extent that the daily prayer is observed at all, it survives largely among that part of the population which is not gainfully employed: above all, the women and the elders.

788 The younger generation is further handicapped by its ignorance of the
• 869 prayers. Only a few of the refugees interviewed knew how to perform the
177 regular daily prayers; none of those belonged to the younger generation. It may also be added that not one of these refugees had cared to learn the prayers since his arrival in the West.

785 Another important duty of Muslims is to observe daytime fasting during the entire 28 days of the month of Ramazan. Prior to 1917 the fast was